VERSES
NEW AND OLD

JOHN GALSWORTHY

VERSES NEW AND OLD

THE WORKS OF

JOHN GALSWORTHY

NOVELS

VILLA RUBEIN: AND OTHER STORIES
THE ISLAND PHARISEES
THE MAN OF PROPERTY
THE COUNTRY HOUSE
FRATERNITY
THE PATRICIAN
THE DARK FLOWER
THE FREELANDS
BEYOND
FIVE TALES
SAINT'S PROGRESS
IN CHANCERY
TO LET
THE BURNING SPEAR
THE WHITE MONKEY
THE SILVER SPOON

THE FORSYTE SAGA

SHORT STORIES AND STUDIES

A COMMENTARY
A MOTLEY
THE INN OF TRANQUILLITY
THE LITTLE MAN
A SHEAF
ANOTHER SHEAF
TATTERDEMALION

CAPTURES

CARAVAN

POEMS

MOODS, SONGS AND DOGGERELS

MEMORIES (ILLUSTRATED)
AWAKENING (ILLUSTRATED)
ADDRESSES IN AMERICA

PLAYS

FIRST SERIES:	THE SILVER BOX JOY STRIFE
SECOND SERIES:	THE ELDEST SON THE LITTLE DREAM JUSTICE
THIRD SERIES:	THE FUGITIVE THE PIGEON THE MOB
FOURTH SERIES:	A BIT O' LOVE FOUNDATIONS THE SKIN GAME
FIFTH SERIES:	A FAMILY MAN LOYALTIES WINDOWS
SIXTH SERIES:	THE FOREST OLD ENGLISH THE SHOW

The above Plays issued separately

SIX SHORT PLAYS:

THE FIRST AND THE LAST	DEFEAT
THE LITTLE MAN	THE SUN
HALL-MARKED	PUNCH AND GO

VERSES NEW AND OLD

by

JOHN GALSWORTHY

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

COPYRIGHT, 1926, BY
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

Printed in the United States of America

G 13
A 1

DEDICATION

THINE is the solitude that rare flowers know,
Whose face is slender aristocracy.
And yet, of all that in the garden grow,
None other has such sweet supremacy.
For thine's the oldest secret of the world:
How to be loved, and still to keep apart—
A lily blown, a bud not yet uncurled—
Gold-fortuned I, whose very breath thou art!

20650

PREFATORY NOTE

THIS little volume contains some verse selected from *Moods, Songs and Doggerels*, most of it revised; some verse that has appeared in periodicals, and some that has not yet appeared at all. It is issued by request and with every apology.

J. G.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/versesnewold0000john_p5g0

CONTENTS

	Dedication	*page* v
I	Courage	1
II	Errantry	2
III	The Prayer	4
IV	Time	5
V	Acceptation	6
VI	The Downs	7
VII	The Seeds of Light	8
VIII	I Ask	9
IX	Highland Spring	10
X	Old Year's Night	11
XI	The Moon at Dawn	12
XII	Serenity	13
XIII	Nightmare	14
XIV	Let	15
XV	Rhyme of the Land and Sea	16
XVI	Autumn by the Sea	17
XVII	Magpie	19
XVIII	Silver Point	20
XIX	Autumn	21
XX	Street Lamps	22
XXI	Gaulzery Moor	23
XXII	The Moor Grave	24
XXIII	Devon to Me!	25
XXIV	Counting the Stars	27

XXV	Land Song of the West Country	*page* 29
XXVI	Village Sleep Song	31
XXVII	Wembury Church	33
XXVIII	A Mood	34
XXIX	Straw in the Street	35
XXX	Past	36
XXXI	Wind	37
XXXII	Rose and Yew	38
XXXIII	Promenade	39
XXXIV	To My Dog	40
XXXV	"The Birth of Venus"	41
XXXVI	Reminder	42
XXXVII	Valley of the Shadow	43
XXXVIII	Breath of Man	44
XXXIX	Picardy	45
XL	Youth's Own	47
XLI	Merle	48
XLII	The France Flower	49
XLIII	Unknown	50
XLIV	The Bells of Peace	52
XLV	Desert Song	54
XLVI	San Ysidro	56
XLVII	At Sunset	57
XLVIII	Dream House	58
XLIX	Mountain Air	59
L	To Beauty	60

VERSES NEW AND OLD

I

COURAGE

Courage is but a word, and yet, of words,
The only sentinel of permanence;
The ruddy watch-fire of cold winter days,
We steal its comfort, lift our weary swords,
And on. For faith—without it—has no sense;
And love to wind of doubt and tremor sways;
And life for ever quaking marsh must tread.

Laws give it not; before it prayer will blush;
Hope has it not; nor pride of being true;
'Tis the mysterious soul which never yields,
But hales us on to breast the rush
Of all the fortunes we shall happen thro';
And when Death calls across his shadowy fields—
Dying, it answers: "Here! I am not dead!"

II

ERRANTRY

Come! Let us lay a crazy lance in rest,
And tilt at windmills under a wild sky!
For who would live so petty and unblest
That dare not tilt at something ere he die,
Rather than, screened by safe majority,
Preserve his little life to little ends,
And never raise a rebel battle-cry!

Ah! for the weapon wistful and sublime,
Whose lifted point recks naught of woe or weal,
Since Fate demands it shivered every time!
When in the wildness of our charge we reel
Men laugh indeed—the sweeter heavens smile,
For all the world of fat prosperity
Has not the value of that broken steel!

The strange far echo of our challenge cry
Sets ringing all the bells of merriment,
And yet another hidden bell that tolls
A faint and wandering chime of sympathy
Within the true cathedral of our souls—
So, crystal-clear, the shepherd's homeward pipe
From feasts his cynical soft sheep cajoles.

God save the pennon, ragged to the morn,
That signals moon to stand, and sun to fly;
And flutters when the weak is overborne
To stem the tide of fate and certainty.
That knows not reason, and that seeks no fame—
But has engraven round its stubborn wood
The words: "Knight-Errant to Eternity!"

So! Undismayed beneath the serried clouds,
Shall float the banner of forlorn defence—
A jest to the complacency of crowds—
But haloed with the one diviner sense:
To hold itself as nothing to itself;
And in the quest of the imagined star
To lose all thought of after-recompense!

III

THE PRAYER

If on a Spring night I went by
And God were standing there,
What is the prayer that I would cry
To Him? This is the prayer:
O Lord of Courage grave,
O Master of this night of Spring!
Make firm in me a heart too brave
To ask Thee anything!

IV

TIME

Beneath this vast serene of sky
Where worlds are but as mica dust,
From age to age the wind goes by;
Unnumbered summers burn the grass.
On granite rocks, at rest from strife,
The aeons lie in lichen rust.
Then what is man's so brittle life?—
The buzzing of the flies that pass!

V

ACCEPTATION

Blue sky, grey stones, and the far sea,
The lark's song trilling over me;
Grey stones, blue sky, and the green weed—
You have no sense that I can read;
Nor on the wind's breath passing by
Comes any meaning melody!
Blue sky, grey stones, and the far sea,
Lark's song, green weed, wind melody—
You are! And must accepted be!

VI

THE DOWNS

O THE Downs high to the cool sky;
And the feel of the sun-warmed moss;
And each cardoon, like a full moon,
Fairy-spun of the thistle floss;
And the beech grove, and a wood-dove,
And the trail where the shepherds pass;
And the lark's song, and the wind-song,
And the scent of the parching grass!

VII

THE SEEDS OF LIGHT

Once of a mazy afternoon, beside a southern sea,
I watched a shoal of sunny beams come swimming close to me.
Each like a whited candle-flame—left flickering in air;
Each like a silver daffodil astonied to be there;
Or like a diving summer star, its brightness come to lave;
Or e'en a little naked spirit leaping on the wave.

And while I sat, and while I dreamed, beside that summer sea,
There came the fairest thought of all that ever came to me:
The little lives of little men, no more they seemed to mean
Than one of those bright seeds of light sown on that water green;
No more they seemed, no less they seemed, than shimmerings of sky—
The sunny sudden smiles of God that glisten forth and die.

VIII

I ASK

My happy lime is gold with flowers;
From noon to noon the breezes blow
Their love pipes; and the wild bees beat
Their drums and sack the blossom bowers . . .
Yet, stifling in the valley heat,
A woman's dying there below!

Between the blowing rose so red
And honey-saffroned lily cup,
Receiving heaven, so I lie! . . .
But down the field a calf lies dead;
At this same burning summer sky
Its velvet darkened eye looks up.

* * * * *

Behind the fairest masks of life
Dwells ever that pale constant death.
Philosophers! What shall we say?
Must we keep wistful death to wife?
Or hide her image quite away,
And, wanton, draw forgetful breath?

IX

HIGHLAND SPRING

There's mating madness in the air,
Passionate, grave. The blossoms burst;
The burns run quick to lips athirst;
And solemn gaze young maids heart-free.

The white clouds race, the sun rays flare
And turn to gold the pallid mist;
With greedy mouth the Spring has kissed
The wind that links the sky with sea.

The blue and lonely mountains stare,
And long to draw the blue above.
The hour is come! O Flower of Love—
I can no longer keep from thee!

X

OLD YEAR'S NIGHT

How fast the slim feet move!
The fiddles whine, the reedy oboes toot;
Lips whisper, eyes look love—
And Old Year's dying underfoot!

* * * * *

The moonlight floods the grass,
The music's hushed, and all the festal din;
The pale musicians pass,
Each clasping close his violin.

XI

THE MOON AT DAWN

When, at the dawn, the homeless breeze
Creeps back to wake the sleeping trees,
The moon steals down and no one sees!

Yes! in the morn, no watcher there,
She turns a face, once angel fair,
And smiles, as only harlots dare!

* * * * *

I saw her once, the insatiate moon,
Go stealing, coiffed with orange hood,
From night, her lover, still in swoon—
All wicked she, who once was good!

XII

SERENITY

The smiling sea
And dunes and sky
Dream; and the bee
Goes dreaming by.

In heaven's field
Moon's scimitar
Is drawn to shield
One dreaming star.

The dreaming flowers
And lovers nod.
Serene these hours—
Serene is God.

XIII

NIGHTMARE

THERE fell a man in the heat,
Out of the race he ran,
Who knew too well he was not beat—
O God! Was *I* that man?

XIV

LET

My love lived there! And now
'Tis but a shell of brick,
New-painted, flowered about—
So far from being quick
As night, when stars die out.

From windows gaily lit,
Where once in curtained dark
My heaven used to hide,
The memories wan and stark
Troop down to me outside.

XV

RHYME OF THE LAND AND SEA

By the side of me—the immortal Pan—
Lies the sweetest thing of the sea;
In her gown of brine,
With her breast to mine,
And her drowned dark hair lies she!

But her smile—like the wine-red, shadowy sea,
When the day slides on and down—
By the gods, it is tender death to me!
In its waters dark I drown!
"O slave of mine! Thou mystery
Of smiling depths—I drown!"

XVI

AUTUMN BY THE SEA

We'll hear the murmur of the swell,
And touch the drift-wood gray,
And with our quickened senses smell
The sea-flowers all the day.

We'll watch the hills, the pastures brown,
The trees of changing hue,
Till evening's ice comes stealing down
From those high fields of blue;

And far the crimson Sun-god sails
Away in sunset cloak;
And gentle heat's gold pathway fails
In autumn's opal smoke.

And then we'll watch the bright half-moon—
Slow-spinning in the sky.
And trace the dark flight—all too soon—
Of land-birds wheeling by.

Through all the night of stars we'll touch
The quietude of things,
And gain brief freedom from the clutch
Of Life's encompassings.

XVII

MAGPIE

MAGPIE, lonely flying—
What do you bring to me?
Two for joy, and one for sorrow!
Loved to-day, is lost to-morrow!
Magpie, flying, flying—
What have you brought to me?

XVIII

SILVER POINT

Sharp against a sky of gray
Pigeon's nest in naked tree;
Every silver twig up-curled,
Not a budding leaf unfurled,
Nor a breath to fan the day!

World aspiring and severe,
Not a hum of fly or bee,
Not a song, and not a cry,
Not a perfume stealing by;
Stillest moment of the year!

XIX

AUTUMN

When every leaf has different hue
And flames of birch tree blow;
And high against November blue
The white cloud's bent in bow;

When buzzard hawk wheels in the Sun,
And bracken crowns the cleave,
And autumn stains the heather dun,
And wan buds make believe;

When droning thresher hums its song
And tale of harvest proves,
And rusty steers the lane-ways throng,
And gray birds flit in droves;

Then bird, and beast, and every tree
And those few flowers that blow,
Against the winter hearten me
Who would no winter know!

XX

STREET LAMPS

Lamps, lamps! Lamps ev'rywhere!
You wistful, gay, and burning eyes,
You stars low-driven from the skies
Down on the rainy air.

You merchant eyes that never tire
Of spying out our little ways,
Of summing up our little days
In ledgerings of fire—

Inscrutable your nightly glance,
Your lighting and your snuffing out,
Your flicker through the windy rout,
Guiding this mazy dance.

O watchful, troubled gaze of gold,
Protecting us upon our beats—
You piteous glamour of the streets,
Youthless, and never old!

XXI

GAULZERY MOOR

Moor of my name, where the road leads high,
Thro' heather and bracken, gorse and grass,
Up to the crown of the western sky
A spying traveller, slow, I pass.
Silent and lonely the darkening moor,
The beasts are bedded, the birds are gone,
Never a farm, nor a cottage door,
And I on the road alone—alone;
And the south-west wind is beginning to croon
And a listening lonely pine tree sways;
And behind it is hanging a golden moon
For a resting sign at the cornerways.
A thousand years since the stranger came,
And homed him here; and gave me name.

XXII

THE MOOR GRAVE

I LIE out here under a heather sod,
A moor-stone at my head; the moor-winds play
above.
I lie out here. . . . The graveyard of their God
Was not for desperate me who died for love.
I lie out here under the sun and moon;
Across me ponies stride, the curlews cry.
I have no tombstone screed, no: "Soon
To glory shall she rise!" But peace have I!

XXIII

DEVON TO ME!

WHERE my fathers stood
Watching the sea,
Gale-spent herring boats
Hugging the lea;
There my Mother lives,
Moorland and tree.
Sight o' the blossom!
Devon to me!

Where my fathers walked,
Driving the plough;
Whistled their hearts out—
Who whistles now?
There my Mother burns
Fire faggots free.
Scent o' the wood-smoke!
Devon to me!

Where my fathers sleep,
Turning to dust,
This old body throw
When die I must!

There my Mother calls,
Wakeful is She!
Sound o' the west-wind!
Devon to me!

Where my fathers lie,
When I am gone,
Who need pity me
Dead? Never one!
There my Mother clasps
Me. Let me be!
Feel o' the red earth!
Devon to me!

XXIV

COUNTING THE STARS

The cuckoo bird has long gone home
And owls instead and flitting jars
Call out, call out for us to come,
My Love and me, to count the stars;
And into this wide orchard rove—
The whispering trees scarce give us room,
They drop their petals on my Love
And me beneath the apple bloom.

And each pale petal is alive
With dew of twilight from the sky,
Where all the stars hang in their hive—
Such scores to count, my Love and I!
The boughs below, the boughs above,
We scatter, lest their twisted gloom
Should stay the counting of my Love
And me beneath the apple bloom.

And when the Mother Moon comes by
And puts the little stars to bed,
We count, my timid Love and I,
The pretty apple stars instead;

Until at last all lights remove,
And dark sleep, dropping on the combe,
Fastens the eyelids of my Love
And me beneath the apple bloom.

XXV

LAND SONG
OF THE WEST COUNTRY

The lanes are long, and 'ome is far,
But we'll go joggin', joggin' on.
Up dimsy sky, 'ere comes a star,
Over the bank the flowers peep
To see if 'tis the time to sleep.
But we'll go joggin' on.

The sunset's sinkin' down apace,
But we'll go joggin', joggin' on.
The land's all like a maiden's face,
The more yü lüke the less yü see,
'Tis all a müvin' mystery.
And we'll go joggin' on.

The trout are risin' in the stream,
We ford it, joggin', joggin' on.
The mill-wheel's turnin' in a dream;
The chafer's boomin' over'ead,
And every lidd'l bird's in bed.
And we go joggin' on.

The cottages are prayin' smoke,
As we go joggin', joggin' on.
The 'ayrick's bonneted a-poke;
The beasts are chewin' at their ease
The evenin' cud beneath the trees,
As we go joggin' on.

There's many a teasin' drop o' rain
As we go joggin', joggin' on.
And many a brave while fine again.
There's many a dip and many a rise,
And many a smile o' dinky eyes.
There's many a scent, and many a tüne,
And over all the lidd'l müne,
As we go joggin' on.

XXVI

VILLAGE SLEEP SONG

Sleep! all who toil;
No longer creaks the harvest wain,
For sleeping lies the harvest day,
Asleep the winding leafy lane
Where none's afoot to miss his way.

Sleep! village street,
You've stared too long upon the sun;
Now turn you to the gentle moon.
Sleep, windows! for your work is done,
To-morrow's light will come too soon!

Sleep! Sleep! The heat
Is over in the darkened home.
A night-jar's spinning in the brake.
And—hark!—the floating owls have come
To try and keep the hours awake.

Sleep! honey hives!
And swallow's flight, and thrushes' call!
Sleep, tongues, a little, while you may,
And let night's cool oblivion fall
On all the gossip of the day.

Sleep! Men and wives,
A sweetness of refreshment steal;
The morning star can vigil keep;
Too quickly turns the slumber wheel—
And all you little children, sleep!

XXVII

WEMBURY CHURCH

HERE stand I,
Buttressed over the sea!
Time and sky
Take no toll from me.

To me, gray—
Wind-gray, flung with foam—
Ye that stray
Wild-foot, come ye home!

Mother I—
Mother I will be!
Ere ye die,
Hear! O sons at sea!

Shall I fall,
Leave my flock of graves?
Not for all
Your rebelling waves!

I stand fast—
Let the waters cry!
Here I last
To Eternity!

XXVIII

A MOOD

Love's a flower, 'tis born and broken,
Plucked apace—and hugged apart.
Evening comes, it clings—poor token—
Dead and dry, on lover's heart.

Love's the rhyme of a summer minute
Woven close like hum of flies;
Sob of wind, and meaning in it
Dies away, as summer dies.

Love's a shimmery morning bubble
Puffed all gay from pipe of noon;
Spun aloft on breath of trouble—
Bursts in air—is gone—too soon!

XXIX

STRAW IN THE STREET

Straw in the street!
My heart, oh! hearken—
Fate thrums its song of sorrow!
The windows darken . . .
O God of all to-morrow!

Straw in the street!
To wintry sleeping
Turns all our summer laughter.
The brooms are sweeping . . .
There's naught for me hereafter!

XXX

PAST

The clocks are chiming in my heart
A cobweb chime;
Old murmurings of days that die,
The sob of things a-drifting by.
The clocks are chiming in my heart!

The stars have twinkled, and died out–
Fair candles blown!
The hot desires burn low, and gone
To ash the fire that flamed anon.
The stars have twinkled, and died out!

Old journeys travel in my head!
My roaming time—
Forgotten smiles of stranger friends,
Sweet, weary miles, and sweeter ends.
Old journeys travel in my head!

The leaves are dropping from my tree!
Dead leaves and flown,
The vine-leaf ghosts are round my brow;
For ever frosts and winter now.
The leaves are dropping from my tree!

XXXI

WIND

Wind, wind—heather gipsy,
Whistling in my tree!
All the heart of me is tipsy
On the sound of thee.
Sweet with scent of clover
Salt with breath of sea.
Wind, wind—wayman lover,
Whistling in my tree!

XXXII

ROSE AND YEW

Love flew by! Young wedding day,
Peeping through her veil of dew,
Saw him, and her heart went fey—
His wings no shadows threw.

Love flew by! Young day was gone,
Owls were hooting—Whoo-to-whoo!
Happy-wedded lay alone,
Who'd vowed that love was true.

* * * * *

Love flies by, and drops a rose—
Drops a rose, a sprig of yew!
Happy these—but ah! for those
Whose love has cried: Adieu!

XXXIII

PROMENADE

All sweet and startled gravity,
My Love comes walking from the Park;
Her eyes are full of what they've seen—
The little bushes puffing green,
The candles pale that light the chestnut tree.

The tulip and the jonquil spies;
The sunshine and the sudden dark;
The dance of buds; and Madam Dove;
Sir Blackbird fluting to his love—
These little loves my Love has in her eyes.

In dainty shoes and subtle hose
My Love comes walking from the Park,
She is, I swear, the sweetest thing
That ever left the heart of Spring,
To tell the secret: Whence the pollen blows!

XXXIV

TO MY DOG

My dear, when I leave you
I always drop a bit of me—
A holy glove or sainted shoe—
Your wistful corse I leave it to,
For all your soul has followed me.
How could I have the stony heart
So to abandon you!

My dear, when you leave me
You drop no glove, no sainted shoe;
And yet you know what humans be—
Mere blocks of dull monstrosity—
My spirit cannot follow you
When you're away, with all its heart
As yours can follow me.

My dear, since we must leave
(One sorry day) I you, you me;
I'll learn your wistful way to grieve;
Then through the ages we'll retrieve
Each other's scent and company;
And longing shall not pull my heart—
As now you pull my sleeve!

XXXV

"THE BIRTH OF VENUS"

The Spring wind fans her hair,
And after her fly little waves,
Her feet are shod in pearly shoen,
And down her foam-white breast do shine
A silver moisture and new-strewn
Petals encarnadine.

Her eyes are deaths to care,
Her eyes of love are tender caves.
The blossoms blowing on the trees—
The leafy Spring's enchanted stir—
The humming of the golden bees—
All are the voice of her!

XXXVI

REMINDER

Each star that rises and doth fade,
Each bird that sings its song and sleeps,
Each spark of spirit fire that leaps
Within me—of One Flame are made!

XXXVII

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

God, I am travelling out to death's sea,
I, who exulted in sunshine and laughter,
Thought not of dying—death is such waste of me!—
Grant me one prayer: Doom not the hereafter
Of mankind to war, as though I had died not—
I, who in battle, my comrade's arm linking,
Shouted and sang—life in my pulses hot
Throbbing and dancing! Let not my sinking
In dark be for naught, my death a vain thing!
God, let me know it the end of man's fever!
Make my last breath a bugle call, carrying
Peace o'er the valleys and cold hills for ever!

XXXVIII

BREATH OF MAN

THRO' the green grass the whisper ran:
"Death is coming with the breath of man!
No life shall creep, no breeze shall rustle here!
The fruit-trees shall be scythed, their blossom
spilled,
And Spring's dear promise to them unfulfilled!
The sun no more unfurling leaves will see,
But shine on witch-like reverie
Of splinters charred toward the sky.
Here, as each storm goes wheeling by,
The rain will wet the stumps of death
And water lifeless earth beneath."

* * * * *

The birds have gathered—every wing
All taut with panic of the thing
Which creeps, with that fierce gasping, on—
Till silence cries: "The birds are gone!"

XXXIX

PICARDY

When the trees blossom again;
  When our spirits lighten—
When in quick sun and rain
  Once more the green fields brighten;
Each golden flower those fields among,
The hum of thrifting bee,
Will be the risen flower and song
Of Youth's mortality.

When the birds flutter their wings;
  When our scars are healing—
When the furry-footed things
  At night again are stealing;
Then through the wheat each rippling wave,
The fragrance of flower breath,
Will bring a message from the grave,
A whispered word from death.

When the sweet waters can flow;
  When the world's forgetting—
When once more the cattle low
  At golden calm sun-setting;

Each peaceful evening's murmur, then,
And sigh the waters give,
Will tell immortal tale of men
Who died that we might live.

XL

YOUTH'S OWN

Out of the fields I see them pass,
  Youth's own battalion—
Like moonlight ghosting over grass—
  To dark oblivion.

They have a wintry march to go—
  Bugle and fife and drum!
With music, softer than the snow
  All flurrying, they come!

They have a bivouac to keep
  Out on a starry heath;
To fling them down, and sleep and sleep
  Beyond reveillé—Death!

Since Youth has vanished from our eyes,
  Who, living, glad can be?
Who will be grieving, when he dies
  And leaves this Calvary?

XLI

MERLE

The sea and sky are grey—
  As with the grief of those who've mourned;
Yet through this drear December day
  A lonely merle to song has turned.

Brave bird, for you no fears!
  Though to the sun you're strange—as we,
Across the waste of these last years
  Bereft of all hilarity.

Then, bird! be voice for all
  The sad who have forgotten song.
Shake far that trilling lift and fall
  Of notes, and take our hearts along!

XLII

THE FRANCE FLOWER

I STROLL forth this flowery day
Of "print frocks" and buds of May,
And speedwells of tender blue
Whom no sky can match for hue.

I love well my English home;
Yet far thoughts do stealing come
To throng me like honey-bees,
Till far flowers my fancy sees.

'Tis almond against the snows,
And gentian, and mountain rose,
And iris in purple bright—
The France flower, the flower of light.

XLIII

UNKNOWN

You who had worked in perfect ways
To turn the wheel of nights and days,
Who coaxed to life each running rill
And froze the snow-crown on the hill,
The cold, the starry flocks who drove,
And made the circling seasons move;
How came your jesting purpose when
You fashioned monkeys into men?

You who invented peacock's dress—
You, Lord of cruel happiness!—
Who improvised all flight and song
And loved and killed the whole day long,
And filled with colour to the brim
The cup of your completed whim!
What set you frolicking when we
Were given power to feel and see?

Why not have kept the stellar plan
Quite soulless and absolved from man?
What heavy need to make this thing—
A monkey with an angel's wing;

A murderous poor saint, who reaps
His fields of death, and, seeing—weeps?
No!—If the saffron day could sigh
And sway *unconscious*—Why am I?

* * * * *

Unknown! You slept one afternoon
And dreamed, and turned, and woke too soon!
The sorrel glowed, and the bees hummed,
And Mother Nature's fingers strummed,
And flock of dandelion was blown,
And the yew-trees cast their shadows down.
Such beauty seemed to you forlorn—
And lo!—this playboy, Man, was born!

XLIV

THE BELLS OF PEACE

Lilies are here, tall in the garden bed,
And on the moor are still the buds of May;
Roses are here—and, tolling for our dead,
The Bells of Peace make summer holiday.

And do *they* hear, who in their springtime went?
The young, the brave young, leaving all behind,
All of their home, love, laughter and content,
The village sweetness and the western wind.

Leaving the quiet trees and the cattle red,
The southern soft mist over granite tor—
Whispered from life, by secret valour led
To face the horror that their souls abhor.

Here in the starlight to the owl's "To-Whoo!"
They wandered once; they wander still, maybe,
Dreaming of home, clinging the long night thro'
To sound and sight fastened in memory.

Here in the sunlight and the bracken green—
  Wild happy roses starring every lane—
Eager to reach the good that might have been,
  They *were* at peace. Are they at peace again?

Bells of remembrance, on this summer's eve
  Of our relief, Peace and Goodwill ring in!
Ring out the Past, and let not Hate bereave
  Our dreaming dead of all they died to win!

XLV

DESERT SONG

When I came on from Santa Fé,
The desert road by night and day,
The desert wilds ran far and free
Beneath the wind of desert sea.

But—ah! my heart!—to know again
The scent of rain, the scent of rain!

And I'd in fancy scale the air
Beyond those yellow mountains bare,
And so with dizzy bird survey
A thousand miles of shining day.
And I would glean the gold of sun
And mark his curving glory run
Its fiery course, and eager turn
My cheek and pallid brow to burn.

But—oh! my heart!—to feel again
The wet of rain, the wet of rain!

And wakeful all the night I'd lie
And watch the dark infinity,

And count the stars that wheel and spin,
And drink the frosty ether in;
And I would hear the desert song
That silence sings the whole night long,
And day by day the whisper pass
Of parching heat through desert grass.

But—oh! my heart!—to hear again
The drip of rain, the drip of rain!

When I rode on from Santa Fé,
That desert road by night and day,
There came at last a little sigh,
A puff of white across the sky.

And—ah! my heart!—I knew again
The scent of rain, the scent of rain!

XLVI

SAN YSIDRO

The Spaniard-christened Isles
Lie out in summer's glow;
High on a live-oak tree
A bird sits still; below
A chipmunk plays; the sea
In southern beauty smiles.

This far enchanted shore,
Like to a wistful dream
Lulling the heart of man,
The face of truth might seem—
God resting—but His plan
He changes evermore.

XLVII

AT SUNSET

I've seen the moon, with lifted wing—
A white hawk—over a cypress tree;
The lover's star, the bloom of Spring,
And evening folded on Tennessee.

I've seen the little streams run down—
All smoke-blue, lost in faerie;
And, far, the violet mountains crown
The darkness breathing on Tennessee.

I've seen the Beautiful, so clear—
And it has gone to the heart of me—
So there'll be magic ever near
To me, remembering Tennessee.

XLVIII

DREAM HOUSE

Down on our house good shelter falls
From those high neighbouring white walls,
And here it dreams among its flowers
And bushes bright with summer showers.

Its creepered brick soaks up the smile
Of noon and afternoon, the while
The bees go tunnelling the deep
Dim lily bells that sway and sleep.

The day slips on, and sun's hot eye
Cools in the lime trees, down the sky.
'Tis twilight now, the birds refrain
From song, and all is still again.

Now night creeps over, distance hides;
The white house—a tall iceberg—rides;
A chafer breaks the darkened swoon,
And white wide roses scan the moon.

XLIX

MOUNTAIN AIR

Tell me of Progress if you will,
But give me sunshine on a hill—
The grey rocks spiring to the blue,
The scent of larches, pinks, and dew,
And summer sighing in the trees,
And snowy breath on every breeze.
  Take towns and all that you'll find there,
  And leave me sun and mountain air!

L

TO BEAUTY

Beauty on your wings—flying the far blue,
Flower of man's heart whom no God made;
Star, leaf-breath, and gliding shadow,
Fly with me, too, awhile!

Bring me knowledge:
How the pansies are made, and the cuckoos' song!
And the little owls, grey in the evening, three on a gate;
The gold-cups a-field, the flight of the swallow;
The eyes of the cow who has calved;
The wind passing from ash-tree to ash-tree!

For thee shall I never cease aching?
Do the gnats ache that dance in the sun?
Do the flowers ache, or the bees rifling their gold?
Is it I only who ache?
Beauty! Fulfil me! Cool the heart of my desire!

DATE DU

Unless this book is returned on or before the last date stamped below a fine will be charged. Fairness to other borrowers makes enforcement of this rule necessary.

DEC 4 1928
JUN 8 1930
JUN 12 1930
MAR 13 1933
NOV 24 1936
NOV 23 1934
JUN 1 1945
28 1960
NOV 28 1960

LAKE ERIE COLLEGE - LINCOLN LIBRARY
CIRC 821.91 G13, A1
Galsworthy, J Verses new and old.
3 0356 0001 5156 3

821.91
G13
A1

821.91 Galsworthy
G13 Verses new and old
A1 20650